

Testimony of Lisa Klein
Charter Oak State College Student
Appropriations Committee

February 15, 2017

Good evening members of the Appropriations Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you tonight.

After almost 30 years of pursuing an education, I am in my final semester at Charter Oak State College and will earn my Bachelor's degree. When I think about it, I still cannot believe my time has come. Had it not been for the unique program available to me through this institution, I would never have been able to finish. Being a single mother, time and money are never abundant. I was extremely fortunate when a coworker, a much younger single mom, told me about the Women In Transition program at Charter Oak. Taking a chance, one meeting with the caring and compassionate advisors of this unorthodox approach to learning set me on course to FINALLY finish my studies. I was told that I qualified for a spot in the W.I.T. program, and that I would have no out-of-pocket expenses to get my degree. I cried.

On-line courses are coveted by those of us who have to balance parenthood and employment while striving to improve ourselves and advancing our chances in the workplace. My children say that seeing me do homework at the dining table, even after a long day as a Special Needs Paraprofessional and in between my mommy-do's, is inspiring to them. To hear this is a parent's dream. Last March, I was in an accident and sustained a concussion, multiple herniated discs in my neck, and could not travel. My dream would have been impossible had it not been for the online format offered by COSC. By working closely with my professors, I was able to stay on-track, and plan to walk at graduation this coming June.

After graduation, I will establish a non-profit, therapeutic art gallery to provide a safe, creative environment where families can come together and enjoy multi-cultural events. I cannot wait to frame my diploma, hang it proudly on the wall, and tell others that there are always alternative methods to reaching your dream IF you think outside of the norm. Charter Oak State College provided me with the alternative method to reach my dreams. And I will be sharing this experience with countless others.

Thank you for your time and for the opportunity to speak today.